

*Ammonia discharges degrade the Delta and cost the Valley water and jobs*

**Fresno, CA** – Today, Congressman Jim Costa blasted Sacramento sanitation officials, stating that their disregard for the facts and inaction to remove ammonia from treated sewage being dumped into the Delta is costing the Valley jobs and a fair share of water. Costa's latest call for northern officials to get serious about cleaning up the Delta follows the release of a sanitation district-funded study that investigates the cost to the Sacramento region of reducing ammonia discharges into the water system (for more on the study, click [here](#) ).

"It's unacceptable that big polluters to our North continue to treat the facts like toilet paper while they flush ammonia into the Delta," said Costa. "The feet dragging by Sacramento sanitation officials shows just how broken our water policy is. It's ridiculous that pollution upstream can go unchecked while critics of our Valley try to cut off our water and scapegoat our region for the problems in the Delta. It's time for sanitation officials to get moving and start playing a role in California's water crisis."

Reducing ammonia discharges is critical to addressing the major issues degrading the environmental health of the Delta. To date, regulatory agencies have focused almost solely on water exports to the Valley while overlooking other factors contributing to the decline of the Delta. This single-minded approach has restricted the Valley's water, devastating communities and the local economy.

"Misguided policies have cost the Valley dearly in terms of jobs and economic opportunity. They have devastated our farmers, farm workers, and working families. The people of our Valley will not yield any more ground and will not accept further inaction by other parts of the state. We have pushed back against the flawed regulations and our critics to secure more water this year. We will continue to do whatever it takes to protect our way of life as we work with everyone in California to address our water challenges."

Two recent studies point to Sacramento's wastewater as a significant cause behind the declining fish populations in the Delta. One study, authored by Patricia Glibert of the University of Maryland, concludes that the Delta's environmental problems are more likely tied to wastewater pollution than to water diversions, indicating that increased ammonia in Sacramento wastewater has disrupted algae production in the Delta, which rippled up the food chain to compromise fish species. Another study by Inge Werner, a toxicologist at UC Davis, concluded that threatened Delta smelt may be harmed by exposure to ammonia at levels below federal

limits and that long-term exposure could reduce smelt growth and feeding activity, which would ultimately affect their breeding success.

Earlier this year, Costa wrote to the State Water Resources Control Board and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to take immediate action to address ammonia discharges being dumped into the Delta. To read this letter, click [here](#) .